

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program-Farm Bill (FY13) Application Proposal

Requested funding \$. 00

To: Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development

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From: Organization Name (here)

Contact Person

Address

Phone Number

FAX Number

EMAIL Address

Cover Page: Include the employer identification number. If you are not already registered with the State of Michigan as a vendor, please go to this website for directions on how to register for a Vendor Identification Number.

http://www.michigan.gov/budget/0,1607,7-157-13404_37161-179392--,00.html

Project Title: The title shall adequately describe the project.

Project Partner: Include the partner organization's name that plans to oversee the project.

Abstract: Include a project abstract of 200 words or less. The project abstract must contain a summary of the proposed project suitable for dissemination to the public. It should be a self-contained description of the project and should contain a statement of objectives and methods to be employed.

Project Purpose: The following questions shall be addressed in this section:

- A. What is the specific issue, problem or need to be addressed by the project?
- B. Why is the project important and timely?
- C. What are the objectives of the project?
- D. How will the applicant ensure that all grant funding is being used to solely enhance the competitiveness of eligible specialty crops?
- E. Has the project been submitted to or funded by another Federal or State grant program? Please indicate Yes or No.
- F. Does the project build on a previously SCBGP or SCBGP-FB funded project?

IF YES, how does this project compliment work done previously?

Provide a summary (three to five sentences per project) of the results of the completed work on this project, the long-term quantifiable effects of these results (especially as they impact on the specialty crop industry), and how this year's funding will supplement or build on previous funding from the SCBGP or SCBGP-FB.

Potential Impact: This section shall show how the project potentially impacts the specialty crop industry and/or the public rather than a single organization, institution, or individual. The following questions should be answered:

- A. Who are the specialty crop beneficiaries of the project?
- B. How will the specialty crop beneficiaries be impacted by the project?
- C. What is the potential economic impact of the project if available?

Expected Measurable Outcome(s): Describe at least **one** distinct, quantifiable, and measurable outcome(s) that support the project's purpose. It is important that each outcome provides evidence about the accomplishment of a particular program objective. These outcomes are program-focused, measurable, specific, and clear. Your measurable outcome(s) should include:

Goal: The objective you are seeking (i.e. increasing sales, increasing number of growers).

Target: The specific number, percentage, dollar amount, etc. that you are hoping to achieve. (Examples: 10% increase in sales within one year; 250 growers participating by the projects end).

Benchmark: The baseline number, dollar amount, etc. that you are measuring from (if known). (Examples: 2010 sales in this market were \$1.5 million; there is no benchmark established—this is new training).

Steps to Developing Outcome Measures

Whenever possible, the outcomes should include a goal, performance measure, benchmark, and a target. The following four steps provide guidance on how to develop outcome measures.

1) Determine what the project will accomplish, i.e., the intended results of the project, generally expressed as a GOAL or OBJECTIVE.

Goals or objectives should be:

- A. Based on a needs analysis, realistic results you hope to achieve through the project activities.
- B. Be specific.
- C. Outcome-oriented. Outcome-oriented objectives identify the ultimate *result*, while the work plan activities identify *how* you intend to achieve the objectives. When developing outcome-oriented objectives, ask yourself, “why” you are performing each grant activity; and specify not only what will be achieved, but also when those results will be achieved.

2) Figure out how to measure the results and select the PERFORMANCE MEASURE.

For each objective identified in step 1, select the performance measure.

Performance measures are measures/indicators used to observe progress and measure actual results compared to expected results. They are usually expressed in quantifiable terms and should be objective and measurable (numeric values, percentages, scores and indices); although in certain circumstances qualitative measures are appropriate.

3) Determine the BENCHMARK for each measure and set TARGET goals for future performance.

For each measure identified in step 2, determine the benchmarks against which you will measure. Benchmarks are usually determined by researching past circumstances in the area you are trying to measure. As an alternative, you may use benchmarks established by third parties accepted as the standard-setters in your industry. If data does not exist, describe the lack of data. It may be appropriate in the first year to set vague targets, such as “improvement” where any increase represents outcome achievement, and set more concrete targets in subsequent years when benchmark data is available. Use the benchmark data to set targets for the quantity of change expected.

Targets may be framed in terms of:

- A. Absolute level of achievement (ex: feed 150 homeless people);
- B. Change in level of achievement (ex: feed 150 homeless people, 35 more than last year); or
- C. Change in relation to the scale of the problem (ex: feed 150 homeless people, approximately 10% of the city’s homeless population.)

If you are starting up a new project or trying new approaches remember that little or no measurable progress will be evident in the project start-up phase. This delay in seeing measurable results should be reflected in target-setting. When setting targets, you should take into account external factors that influence your success. You may have a

grand ultimate goal, but you should view annual targets as small steps toward that ultimate goal.

You may also want to set stretch goals by using benchmarks as your targets. Benchmarks tell you how the rest of the industry is doing; when you gather data for benchmarks, you look at the results of other organizations serving your type(s) of customers, doing your type of work. In your plan, you may want to stick to a modest level of planned achievement and reserve your stretch goals for internal use. Another alternative is to include minimum and maximum targets in your application. For example, "We plan, at a minimum, for a 5% increase. However, we will strive for a 10% increase, which our data shows is possible if all external factors work in our favor and our new methodology yields the same results in the demonstration phase."

Performance Measure: How you will measure whether the goal and target are being achieved? If using a survey or a questionnaire to measure performance, provide information about the nature of the questions and the population to be surveyed. If a draft is available, include a copy. (Examples: sales figures will be collected from retailers; follow up surveys will be sent to participating growers to measure certifications achieved).

Monitoring: Include how performance toward meeting the outcomes will be monitored. If expected measurable outcomes will be monitored after the grant period ends, describe how monitoring will continue without grant funding.

Work Plan: List all activities that will be performed to accomplish the objectives of the project. Be specific about what will be done. Clearly state who will conduct the work and why this person or organization was selected. Include appropriate timelines for the project and expected date of completion. It may be helpful to put this information into a chart and insert into your application.

Budget Narrative: Include total estimated cost for the project with a breakdown of grant dollars. The budget should contain a narrative in paragraph format for each project in order for USDA-AMS and MDARD to determine the costs are reasonable and allowable. The budget narrative should clearly show the federal funds that support the project. In the budget narrative, provide information for the budget categories listed below:

- This is a cost reimbursement program.
- **In-kind Funds** - will not be accepted as match dollars.
- **Administration Expenses** - The department will not accept any proposal with a budget line of administration expenses. (pre-award costs, proposal costs; depreciation or use allowances on buildings and equipment; costs of operating and maintaining facilities; general administration and general expenses; and personnel, legal, information technology, and accounting administration.)
 - Indirect costs are not allowable under this grant program.
- **Awarded Grant(s)** will range from \$10,000 to \$75,000.

Budget Snapshot: Provide a brief overview of what your budget will be in the following categories:

Personnel: For each employee or project participant, indicate their position or title, the percent of full time equivalents (FTE), and the corresponding salary for the FTE. Those not directly employed by the applying entity would be listed as subcontractors or consultants in the “Contractual” category.

Fringe Benefits: List all mentioned in Personnel that are eligible for benefits, include the type of benefit, salary calculated in the Personnel section and rate of calculation of each benefit.

Travel: For each trip, please provide the destination, purpose, number of trips, number of travelers and number of days travelling, estimated airfare costs, estimated ground transportation costs, estimated lodging and meals costs; and estimated mileage rate and costs for the travel. If you are following your written travel policies, please indicate that fact.

Note: All travel expenses shall follow grant applicant’s written travel policies or U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) rates at [GSA Home http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100000](http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100000)

Supplies: Provide an itemized list of any materials needed to accomplish this project. Be sure to include quantity of item and the total dollar amount for each item.

Contractual: Provide a short description of the services each contract covers and indicate if the cost is a flat rate fee or hourly rate. Hourly rates for contractors should not exceed the salary of a Federal employee (GS-14 step 10) in your area. For current rates, please go to [General Schedule http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/2011/general-schedule](http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/2011/general-schedule). If rates exceed the amount listed, provide a brief justification.

Other: Provide detailed descriptions of other costs such as conferences or meetings, communications, speaker/trainer fees, publication costs, and data collection, and other budgeted costs associated with the project. Provide a detailed description of all other direct costs such as:

Conferences/Meeting – Costs of holding a conference or meeting are included in this category. Some examples are the rental of facilities or equipment for the meeting. Details of costs for each conference or meeting should be broken out and provided in the budget. When paying for the travel of a person to attend a conference, meals and lodging may be included in the cost without additional justification. Meals may not be charged as project costs when individuals decide to go to lunch or dinner together when no need exists for continuity of a meeting. Such activity is considered to be an entertainment cost. In contrast, meals may be charged to the project when a justification is provided that such activity maintains the continuity of the meeting and to do otherwise will impose arduous conditions on the meeting participants. Breakfasts for conference attendees are usually considered unallowable, as it is expected these individuals will have sufficient time to obtain this meal on their own before the conference begins in the morning.

Communications – Mailings, postage, express mail, faxes, and telephone long distance charges. Provide the estimated cost for this category.

Speaker/Trainer Fees – Provide the amount of the speaker's fees and a description of the services they are providing.

Publication Costs – Provide the estimated cost of printing of brochures and other program materials or scientific or technical journals, as well as an estimate of the number of pieces to be printed/published.

Data collection – Provide the estimated cost of collecting performance data to measure the project outcome measures.

Project Oversight: Who (name, title) will be responsible for the project? How will oversight be performed and in what time frame? Who or what organization will oversee the project activities? How will oversight be performed? For example, will weekly or monthly meetings be held to discuss performance toward the completion of the project?

Project Commitment: Who is in support of this project? How will all grant partners work toward the goals and outcomes of the project? What specialty crop stakeholders outside the lead organization support this project and how?

If you have any questions on the USDA allowable costs, or for additional resources that may be beneficial in preparing your application, please refer to:

www.ams.usda.gov/scbqp

SAMPLE WORK PLAN:

<div> <div>Specialty Crop Block Grant</div> <div>Proposed Work Plan</div> </div>		
Tasks	Responsible Individual	Completed by
Meeting of partners to review project plans and responsibilities.		days after project approval
Organize a planning committee		October 1
Mailing sent to potential sponsors for Event.		Early October
Event held		December
Conduct two seminars		February/March
Conduct three meetings		January/February/ March
Update information and materials to website		January to March
Perform a content review and updates to the website		March to August
Process project invoices and financial reporting		As required
Prepare grant reports		As specified

PROPOSED BUDGET PLAN: (Sample)

Item	Grant Funds	Matching Funds	Project Totals
Salaries			
Executive Director (.2 FTE, \$ Annual Salary)	\$	\$0	\$
Manager, (.2 FTE, \$ Annual Salary)	\$	\$0	\$
Total Salaries	\$	\$0	\$
Fringe Benefits- % (Social Security and Medicare %, State Unemployment Insurance %, Workman's Compensation Insurance %, Disability Insurance %, Retirement %, Health Insurance Supplement %)			
Executive Director	\$	\$0	\$
Manager	\$	\$0	\$
Total Fringes	\$	\$0.00	\$
Domestic Travel			
Travel for grant (approximately miles@ \$.56/mile)	\$	\$0	\$
Lodging- 4 nights () for 2 people @ \$ /night (Must use <u>Per Diem Rates Look-Up</u>; http://gsa.gov/portal/category/100120)	\$	\$0	\$
Meals- for 2 staff members for 4 nights @ \$ person/night (Must use <u>Per Diem Rates Look-Up</u>; http://gsa.gov/portal/category/100120)	\$	\$0	\$
Total Domestic Travel	\$	\$0	\$
Materials & supplies			
Copies of training materials, supplies etc.	\$	\$0	\$
Meeting Room rental (rooms @ \$ / room day rental)	\$	\$0	\$
Total Materials & supplies	\$	\$0	\$
Contracts			
	\$	\$0	\$
Hotel - (event name). This is a fixed rate.	\$	\$0	\$
Total Contracts	\$	\$0	\$
Other			
Phone	\$	\$0	\$
Total Other	\$	\$	\$
Total Direct Cost	\$	\$	\$
Indirect Cost	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Project Cost	\$	\$	\$